

and these crude, and faint, and narrow conceptions of the Christian economy, that these writers commonly represent felicity hereafter as the pure reward of merit. I believe you will find this, as far as any allusions are made to the subject, the prevailing opinion through the school of polite literature. You will perceive it to be the real opinion of many writers who do sometimes advert, in some phrase employed by way of respectful ceremony to *our national creed*, to the work or sacrifice of Christ.

I might remark on the antiChristian motives to action which are sanctioned and inspirited by many of these authors: I will only notice one, the love of glory; that is, the desire of being distinguished, admired, and praised.

No one will think of such a thing as bringing the Christian laws in absolute prohibition of our desire to possess the favourable opinion of our fellow men. In the first place, a material portion of human happiness depends on the attachment of relations and friends, and it is right for a man to wish for the happiness resulting from such attachment. And since the degree in which he will obtain it, must depend very much on the higher or lower estimate which these persons entertain of his qualities and abilities, it is right for him to wish, while he endeavours to deserve, that their estimate may be high, in order that he may enjoy a large share of their affection.

In the next place, it is too plain to be worth an observation, that if it were possible for a man to desire the respect and admiration of mankind purely as a mean of giving a greater efficacy to his efforts for their welfare, and for the promotion of the cause of heaven, while he would be equally gratified that any other man, in whose hands this mean would have exactly the same effect, should obtain the admiration instead of himself, this would be something eminently more than innocent; it would be the apotheosis of a passion which in its ordinary quality deserves no better denomination than vanity. But where is the example?

In the third place, as the Creator has included this desire in the essential constitution of our nature, he intended its gratification, in some limited degree, to be a direct and immediate cause of pleasure. The good opinion of mankind, expressed in praise, or indicated by any other signs,